

**THE WAR MEMORIAL
OF
THE ROYAL FUSILIERS (CITY OF LONDON REGIMENT)
1914 - 1968
'ALBERT'**



Compiled and Edited by J Kelleher

City of London HQ RRF

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THE ARTIST

The following pages give a brief outline of the Royal Fusiliers War Memorial, affectionately known as 'Albert' after the sculptor, Mr Albert Toft.

Albert Toft was born on 3rd.June 1862 at Hunter's Lane, Handsworth, Birmingham into a family of Staffordshire pottery artists. His father, Charles was principal potter at many well known factories including that of Josiah Wedgwood. Albert served his apprenticeship at Wedgwood's, and as his knowledge and craftsmanship progressed he moved to St. John's Wood, London. Whilst in London his reputation grew as he was to receive many accolades. The 2nd Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902 and the Great War 1914-1919 saw him much in demand, and indeed his works on the subject have received much well earned acclaim. Albert Toft had the gift of reproducing the passion and the suffering in his works. He was of course, a noted sculptor in many other subjects. The Royal Fusiliers memorial at Holborn Bars, London has an identical twin, 'Tommy' which is the memorial to the 41st.Division



Great War Memorial at Flers . Despite his many accolades and his being a teacher at Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts, and his election to FRBS in 1924 and HRBS in 1942, he was never elected a member of the Royal Academy. Mr Albert Toft died on 18th.December 1942 at a nursing home in Worthing, Sussex.



THE MEMORIAL

It is to the perpetual memory of 21,941 Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) who gave up their lives in the Great War 1914-19 that the memorial is raised. It also stands as a lasting memorial to those who fell in the World War of 1939-45, and to those who have fallen since 1945, and up to 23rd.April 1968, the date of the formation of The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, of which the Royal Fusiliers formed the 3rd.Battalion until 1993.

In June 1919, several senior officers ie Major General Sir G Barton, Colonel of the Regiment; Major General C G Donald, Brig-General H E B Newnham and Lieut Colonel W P Hill conceived and promoted the idea of a permanent memorial. Mr Albert Toft was approached, and accepted the commission to execute the memorial. He carried out his work at his studio,223 Portsdown Road, Maida Vale London W9, and once completed it was intended that it be erected in one of the London Parks. This idea never achieved fruition and it was decided to erect the memorial in Hounslow Barracks, on the North side of the Cricket Ground facing the Mess Block Hounslow Barracks being the home of the Depot of the Royal Fusiliers. The subscription list to gather funds of £3,000, was closed in August 1920, and late

in 1921 after much thought and deliberation, it was decided to approach the Corporation of the City of London with a view to the memorial being, on completion, erected on a suitable site within the Square Mile. At the time, the current Earl of Dartmouth was approached, and agreed to use whatever influence he could to achieve this aim. He was a direct descendant of George Legge, 1st Lord Dartmouth, who raised and became the first Colonel of Our Royal Regiment of Fuzileers in 1685. He was also directly descended from the first Lord Mayor of London, Sir Thomas Leggy (Legge), who served twice in that office, 1347 and 1354. It was in the latter year that King Edward III granted the title 'Lord Mayor'.

Having received the consent of the City Fathers, Holborn Bars, one of the old gateways to the city was chosen. The main feature of the memorial, a bronze statue, was modelled on Sgt. Cox, a former Royal Fusilier who had served throughout the Great War, depicted in fighting order, grasping in his right hand a rifle and bayonet, in an attitude of Victory, thus guarding the entrance to the City of London. The bronze figure is 8½ feet high standing on a Portland stone pedestal of 16½ feet, a total height of 25 feet. On the East face is a large bronze plate listing all battalions, Regular, Service and Territorial that served in the Great War. On the West face is the Regimental crest of the Royal Fusiliers surmounting the legend

The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)

To the glorious memory of the 22,000 Royal Fusiliers who fell in the Great War 1914-1919

The memorial was unveiled on Saturday 4th.November 1922 at 2.30 pm by the Lord Mayor of London. Unfortunately, Major General Barton did not live to attend the ceremony having passed away in July of this year.

The following additions were made

And to the Royal Fusiliers who fell in the World war 1939-1945

And those Fusiliers killed in subsequent campaigns





**In-Pensioners Charles Dixon, Michael McHenry
and Frederick Wheldon late Royal Fusiliers
pay their respects to fallen comrades**



The original model 'Albert' in miniature

Purchased from Albert Toft by Mr Harry Duffries, late Royal Fusiliers, and later purchased for £10 from Mr Duffries daughter by Major Charles Cutting on 29th May 1954. Major Cutting presented the model to the Royal Fusiliers Museum



Gothic Oak Memorial Cabinet containing the Roll of Honour which was originally presented to the Corporation of London in 1922 and on view to the public at the Guildhall. It was later removed to its current position at City of London HQ

The cabinet cost just over £600 to build